United Nations A/61/578–S/2006/891

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
15 November 2006

Original: English

General Assembly
Sixty-first session
Agenda items 13 and 14

Security Council
Sixty-first year

The situation in the Middle East

Question of Palestine

Identical letters dated 15 November 2006 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I write to inform you of the aggressive assault against Israel by Palestinian terrorists in the Gaza Strip, which occurred today and last night. These attacks are part of the continuing Palestinian campaign of terror to kill Israelis and weaken Israel.

Since I last wrote to you, yesterday, the western Negev of Israel was attacked with 14 more Qassam rockets launched by Palestinian terrorists in the Gaza Strip, 10 of which landed in the city of Sderot.

A 57-year-old woman was murdered by Palestinian terrorists when a Qassam rocket fell as she was walking on the street in Sderot. Two people were treated for severe injuries; one, a 24-year-old security guard, had his legs severed by shrapnel after a rocket hit outside the home of Defense Minister Amir Peretz, and another, a 17-year-old boy, was seriously wounded in the stomach after a rocket hit the Sderot city centre. Three other youths were lightly wounded by shrapnel.

Hours after the rocket attacks on Sderot, four rockets were fired into Ashkelon, a larger city on the north-west lip of the Negev, home to a population of more than 100,000 residents. Countless residents of Ashkelon were treated for shock and trauma.

Israel has the right to defend its citizens from these attacks, and it will. The Palestinians must curb the unremitting terrorist attacks and renounce violence and terror. Continued calls for armed resistance by the Palestinian leadership, and the public and vocal expressions of its refusal to recognize Israel, exacerbate the situation and fuel further violence with hate and vehemence.

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The Palestinian Authority must take control of its people and territory and end the terror against Israel. Our policy here is plain and simple: if the rocket attacks stop, Israel has no need for self-defence.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda items 13 and 14, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Daniel **Carmon**
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.